

## Unit Five

### Joining Sentences to Show Comparison and Contrast

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In your college courses, and in your personal lives and professional careers as well, you will frequently compare and contrast people, things, or ideas. Employers often must compare and contrast two or more job applicants, college students may compare and contrast two historical periods, and people often compare and contrast two products they are considering buying, or two people they know. By joining ideas or information with coordinators and subordinators, you can clearly show similarities and differences to your reader with longer mature sentences rather than choppy short ones.

For example, because two college freshmen, George and Paul, are twin brothers, we expect them to be similar, but they are actually different in some ways. Here are random lists of information we have gathered about them:

#### **George**

is tall and slim  
likes to read science fiction  
runs three miles daily  
has brown eyes and brown hair  
works as a cartographer's assistant 15 hours  
per week  
is an engineering major

#### **Paul**

has brown eyes and brown hair  
is tall and slim  
still hasn't found a major  
likes to read poetry  
hates to exercise  
works 20 hours per week as an usher in a  
theater

The above information about the twins is not listed in any organized way. So after we gather information about two subjects (in this case, the twins), the next step toward comparing and contrasting them is to organize the lists according to related points; here are the twins' physical descriptions, interests, jobs, and college majors:

#### **George**

has brown hair and brown eyes  
is tall and slim  
likes to read science fiction  
runs three miles daily  
works as a cartographer's assistant 15 hours  
per week  
is an engineering major

#### **Paul**

has brown hair and brown eyes  
is tall and slim  
likes to read poetry  
hates to exercise  
works 20 hours per week as an usher in a  
theater  
still hasn't found a major

We can now express the similarities and differences between the twins in sentences using the coordinators and subordinators that you reviewed in Units 3 and 4.

## *Exercise One* George and Paul

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The sentences below express the similarities and differences between the twins George and Paul. In each sentence, circle the joining word(s) that show comparison or contrast and then list the words you've circled below.

1. Both George and Paul have brown eyes and brown hair.
2. George and Paul both are tall and slim.
3. George likes to read science fiction, but Paul likes to read poetry.
4. George runs three miles daily, yet Paul hates to exercise.
5. While George works as a cartographer's assistant 15 hours per week, Paul works 20 hours per week as an usher in a theater.
6. Although George is an engineering major, Paul still hasn't found a major.

**Comparison Words**

**Contrast Words**

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In addition to showing the similarities and differences between people, we often compare and contrast behavior, cultures, theories, points of view on an issue, the positive and negative features of something, or the past with the present. The exercises in this unit give you practice in using coordinators and subordinators to compare and contrast activities, cultures, and a past and present condition. The following chart summarizes the words that show the logical relationships of comparison and contrast.

#### Summary of Comparison and Contrast Words

|                  | <b>Comparison</b>                                     | <b>Contrast</b> |
|------------------|---|-----------------|
| COORDINATORS     | and   | but, yet        |
| SUBORDINATORS    | although<br>even though<br>though<br>while<br>whereas |                 |
| TRANSITION WORDS | however<br>on the other hand                          |                 |

Coordinators can join sentences and begin sentences. When they join sentences, place a comma before the coordinator.

Kim likes heavy metal, but Tom prefers classical music.

Kim likes heavy metal. But Tom prefers classical music.

Subordinators join dependent clauses to sentences. When the dependent clause comes first, place a comma after it; if the dependent clause follows the independent clause, don't use a comma.

While Kim likes prime rib, Tom prefers rice and vegetables.

Kim likes prime rib while Tom prefers rice and vegetables.

Transition words do not join sentences; you have to use a semicolon (;) to join the sentences or begin a new sentence with the transition word.

Kim and Tom have different tastes in music and food; however, they both like to dance.

Kim and Tom have different tastes in music and food. However, they both like to dance.

## *Exercise Two* Getting in Shape

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Carl wants to begin a regular exercise program, but he can't decide between running and walking. To make a rational choice, he lists what he knows about each activity:

### **Running**

improves cardiovascular endurance  
burns 800 to 1000 calories per hour  
can be done in an urban or rural area  
can cause shinsplints and muscle strain  
requires no special equipment

### **Walking**

can be done in an urban or rural area  
is relatively injury-free  
requires no special equipment  
improves circulation and posture  
burns 300 calories per hour

**Step 1:** Organize the two lists according to related points:

### **Running**

1. can be done in a rural or urban area

2.

3.

4.

5.

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### **Walking**

can be done in a rural or urban area

Step 2: Using the coordinators *and*, *but*, and *yet*, and the subordinators *while*, *whereas*, *although*, ( or *even though*), write five sentences in which you compare and contrast running and walking, using the information you organized in step 1.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

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## *Exercise Three* The Nuer and the Bakhteri

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In this exercise, you will compare and contrast two cultures-the Nuer and the Bakhteri. Here are random lists of information about the two cultures:

### **The Nuer**

are pastoral people  
divide labor according to sex  
occupy a flat, grassy region  
use products from cattle for shelter and food  
live in the Sudan  
raise dairy cattle  
women herd the cattle

### **The Bakhteri**

men herd the sheep and goats  
live in Southern Iran  
are pastoral people  
raise sheep and goats  
divide labor according to sex  
occupy a mountainous area  
use products from sheep and goats for shelter  
and food

**Step 1:** Complete the following lists by organizing the information according to related points.

### **The Nuer**

1. are pastoral people
2. live in the Sudan
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

### **The Bakhteri**

- are pastoral people
- live in Southern Iran

Step 2: Write sentences in which you join related similarities and differences using the coordinators and subordinators that show comparison and contrast. Follow the examples below.

1. Both the Nuer and the Bakhteri are pastoral people.
2. The Nuer live in the Sudan while the Bakhteri live in Southern Iran.

You should create five more sentences from your lists in step 1. Be sure to use a variety of coordinators and subordinators that show contrast.

- 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.
  - 6.
  - 7.
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## *Exercise Four* The Netsilik and the Trobriands

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Following the two steps you took in Exercises 2 and 3, compare and contrast two cultures—the Netsilik and the Trobriands. Organize the lists; then write six sentences using joining words that show comparison and contrast.

### **The Netsilik**

hunt seals and caribou  
occupy a cold desert environment  
live on the Arctic Coast  
migrate seasonally  
build houses of snow and ice

value the extended family

### **The Trobriands**

live in villages all year  
value the extended family  
are horticulturists whose primary crop is yams  
occupy warm coral islands  
live on the Trobriand islands off the coast of New  
Guinea

build wooden houses clustered in small villages

**Step 1:** Organize the lists.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Step 2: Combine related points into sentences using coordinators and subordinators.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.



## Comparing the Present and the Past

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While attending her 10 year high school reunion, Jonita saw her old boyfriend Peter, whom she hadn't seen since graduation. She was surprised by the changes in him, and wrote a letter to her best friend describing the changes:

Peter has changed a great deal in the last ten years. Although Peter had curly red hair ten years ago, he now has almost no hair at all. While he once played basketball, now he just watches sports on TV. He hated to read in school, but now he reads all the time. In high school, he wanted to be an engineer, but today he teaches history at a junior college. Most importantly, in high school, he vowed to stay single forever, yet now he is a married man with two children.

When we compare and contrast the past with the present, we have to be careful of verb tenses so that the time is clear for our readers. Notice that Jonita uses the past tense forms of verbs to describe Peter's condition 10 years ago and present tense forms of verbs to describe the way he is now. Watch for time words that indicate which tense should be used:

| <b><i>Time</i></b>    | <b>Past Tense</b>         | <b><i>Time</i></b> | <b>Present Tense</b>      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>10 years ago</i>   | <u>had</u> curly red hair | <i>now</i>         | <u>has</u> almost no hair |
| <i>once</i>           | <u>played</u>             | <i>now</i>         | <u>watches</u>            |
| <i>in school</i>      | <u>hated</u>              | <i>now</i>         | <u>reads</u>              |
| <i>in high school</i> | <u>wanted</u>             | <i>today</i>       | <u>teaches</u>            |
| <i>once</i>           | <u>vowed</u>              | <i>now</i>         | <u>is</u>                 |

## *Exercise Five* The Middleton Boom

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In the following paragraph, fill in each blank with the correct tense of the given verb. Notice that the topic sentence makes it clear that the paragraph will show the differences between Middleton in the past and Middleton now. (It helps to skim the entire passage before filling in the blanks.)

The town of Middleton has changed a great deal in thirty years. Thirty years ago, its population

\_\_\_\_\_ 3,000, while now it \_\_\_\_\_ 43,000 . Many of the current residents now \_\_\_\_\_ in the  
*be be work*

insurance business, a business that \_\_\_\_\_ not exist until 1970, when Pay Up Insurance Company  
*do*

\_\_\_\_\_ its headquarters there. Immediately the insurance business \_\_\_\_\_ unemployed  
*establish attract*

workers from all over the state who in turn \_\_\_\_\_ the need for new services. Before 1970,  
*create*

Middleton \_\_\_\_\_ no libraries, yet now it \_\_\_\_\_ three, each adjacent to new high schools,  
*have have*

which \_\_\_\_\_ built within a three-year period from 1979 to 1982. Students graduating from middle  
*be*

school formerly \_\_\_\_\_ to high school in a neighboring town, but now they \_\_\_\_\_ school in  
*go attend*

their home town.

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